R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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A FORMULA FOR TEACHER PREPARATION.

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GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING INSTRUCTORS ESPECIALLY FOR JUNIOR COLLEGES WERE PROPOSED AT EASTERN WASHINGTON STATE COLLEGE. INSTEAD OF FAVORING THE USUAL RECRUITMENT FROM HIGH SCHOOLS OR UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROGRAMS, EWSC DECIDED ON A METHOD OF INTERINSTITUTIONAL PLANNING. COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHERS WERE INVITED TO JOIN THE EWSC SUMMER FACULTY (1) TO TEACH ENOUGH TO COVER THE SUMMER'S EXPENSES, (2) TO TAKE PART IN A 2-WEEK WORKSHOP DEVISING A CURRICULUM FOR THEIR FUTURE TEACHING COLLEAGUES, AND (3) TO DO ADVANCED STUDY. TWENTY-NINE PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE INSTRUCTORS ACCEPTED. THE MOST IMPORTANT GUIDELINE DEVELOPED WAS THE NEED FOR ON-CAMPUS INTERNSHIPS TO ENSURE THAT THE TEACHER AND THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF THE COLLEGE ARE COMPATIBLE. VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTORS EMPHASIZED XPERIENCE IN BOTH TEACHING AND OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALITY. WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS PUT SUBJECT MATTER COMPETENCE FIRST AND GENERALLY AGREED THAT AN M.A. DEGREE WAS NECESSARY, ALONG WITH EDUCATIONAL BREADTH. THE NEED FOR COMPETENCE IN THE USE OF VARIED INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES AND MEDIA, FOR DEALING WITH DIVERSE STUDENT ABILITIES, AND FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WAS RECOGNIZED. THIS ASSOCIATION OF JUNIOR AND SENIOR COLLEGE STAFFS IS EXPECTED TO EASE DIFFICULTIES IN COURSE EQUIVALENTS AND TRANSFERS AND TO ILLUMINATE THE COMMON AND DIFFERENT ROLES OF THE TWO INSTITUTIONS. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN THE "JUNIOR COLLEGE JOURNAL," VOLUME 37, NUMBER 8, MAY 1967. (HH)

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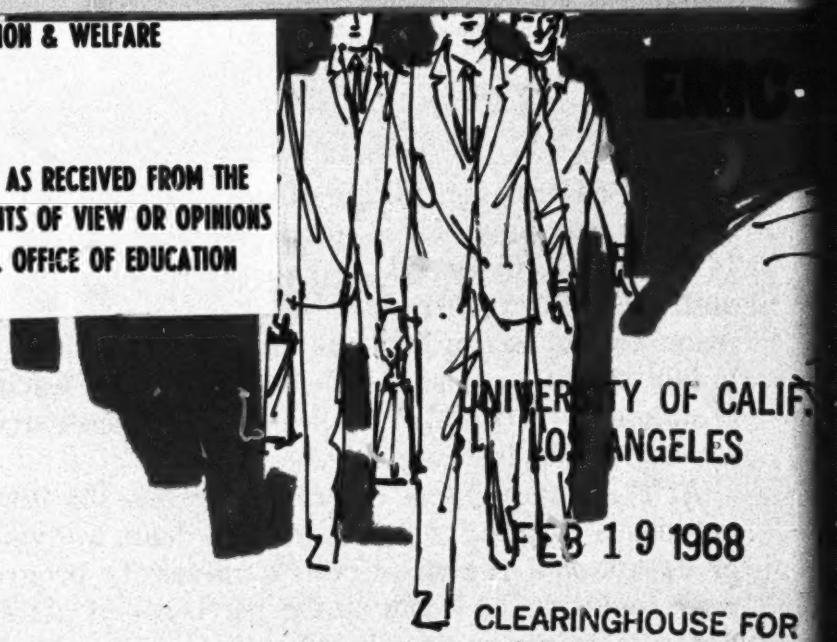

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Eastern Washington State Invited Some "Community College Colleagues" To Help Develop the Formula

A FORMULA FOR TEACHER PREPARATION

By Shirley B. Gordon and Raymond P. Whitfield

Given the resources, authority, and responsibility for preparing your own future community college teaching colleagues, how would you do it?

Twenty-nine community college instructors from the Pacific Northwest grappled with this problem in a workshop held at Eastern Washington State College last summer. The query was not posed merely as a theoretical exercise. As the participants well knew, Eastern is launching a new program to prepare instructors for the mushrooming community colleges of the region. Their answers were to be translated into a program of action.

Deciding how community college teachers should be prepared is no small task. No clear directives have yet been established, although numerous experiments are now under way. What major directives would you propose? How would your proposals compare with those set forth at Eastern?

Guidelines proposed for Eastern by the community college instructors can be fully appreciated only in the light of the circumstances. To begin with the three state colleges in Washington have grown by the familiar metamorphosis from normal schools to colleges of education to state colleges. In 1963 Eastern and the two others were authorized to grant master's degrees in the arts and sciences. Since then all three state colleges have expanded their graduate programs. At the same time the state's community colleges have been expanding rapidly—a recent survey projects nearly a four-fold increase in enrollments during the next twenty years. Thus the need for community college teachers and the resources for their preparation have grown contemporaneously.

This confluence of circumstances suddenly has made the state colleges a significant source of instructors for community colleges. After twenty of Eastern's faculty members visited fourteen community college campuses and discussed the problems of selecting and preparing instructors, they were convinced of the need for a completely new program. Historically, the community colleges have hired staff members largely from high schools or from the graduate programs of our universities, but neither the high school teacher nor the professor receives preparation for the unique duties and challenges of community college instruction. Eastern decided to conceive a new program—and to do it by means of interinstitutional planning instead of attempting to hatch it in the fastnesses of the ivory tower.

An unusual plan of mixing community college instructors with Eastern's faculty members was featured at the 1966 summer session. Eastern requested the president or dean of each community college to designate capable staff members who would like to join the Eastern summer faculty on a three-fold assignment: (a) to teach enough to pay expenses for the summer; (b) to participate in a two-week summer workshop devoted to hammering out the curricular basis for the preparation of their future colleagues; (c) to take advanced study in some field of their choice. Nineteen "community college colleagues" participated under this program. They were joined by five other experienced and five prospective community college instructors.

Shirley B. Gordon, dean of instruction at Highline College, was brought to the campus to direct

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the workshop and Elmer Drevdahl, dean of occupational education at Clark College, served as special consultant for the vocational-technical areas. Julio Bortolazzo, president of San Mateo Junior College District, and Dale Tillery of the University of California's Center for the Study of Higher Education, participated as resource personnel. Numerous members of the Eastern staff, including the president, various deans, division directors, and teaching faculty, attended all or part of the sessions. Before very long participators became well enough acquainted so that issues were discussed freely without concern for disciplines, institutions represented, or positions of the participants.

Preparation for the Environment

What were the results of the proposed guidelines for the new program?

First, the community college staff members made it clear that a sophisticated colleague cannot be prepared in an environment foreign to the kind of institution for which he is training. The community college is many things to many sorts of students: young and old, capable and limited, academic and vocational, mature and immature. The institution is dedicated to the concept of a comprehensive educational program with definite concerns for vocational preparation, as well as for scholarly accomplishment. Students should not be dropped for poor scholarship, but channeled into studies where they can learn useful skills and maintain their self-esteem. At the same time the transfer program for those who will continue in the senior institutions must be as appealing and as respectable as the work offered in the lower division of the four-year colleges and universities.

Obviously, the ability to counsel students and the demand for creative teaching will be of paramount value. Where, they asked, but in a community college which must constantly operate in this atmosphere, can the prospective teacher get into the spirit of the thing? The principal guideline, then, is that prospective community college instructors should serve an internship on the scene; furthermore, the internship should be of such length and depth as to produce an understanding of the situation and to afford a personal appraisal of whether the prospective instructor and the particular demands of the institution are truly compatible.

Breadth and Depth

The vocational and technical instructors hammered on the experience theme with equal vigor. Not only does a prospective teacher in a technical area need preliminary experience in the community college teaching situation before he can instruct effectively, but he first must have mastered his occupational specialty before being considered as an instructor. When, they asked, will the colleges of our technologically based society build a new route to the baccalaureate degree which recognizes vocational accomplishment, fills in the cultural gaps, and provides the professional skills needed by the teacher?

Having settled the issue of an on-the-firing-line experience, workshop members turned their atten-

tion to the knowledge and skills needed for effective teaching performance. Without exception, and to no one's surprise, knowledge of subject matter was given top priority. In discussion a few members were inclined to linger on this point longer than the majority who saw no use in arguing an issue upon which agreement was already unanimous. Graduate study to the master's degree level in the discipline taught was generally considered to be minimum depth. Some emphasized that the degree should definitely be in arts and science, but others allowed the master of education degree as long as depth in the discipline was guaranteed. Beyond this point, however, and more demanding for planning future preparation programs, was the strong insistence upon breadth as well as depth. As one participant summed up the point: "Subject matter competence is essential but of little educational value unless it is transmitted appropriately to the learner; therefore, the good instructor is competent in his specialty and also conversant in the fields beyond his specialty."

Instructional Competence

One might assume by the traditional disciplinary approach to hiring used at four-year colleges that instructional skills would not be highly regarded. Such an assumption was firmly rejected as far as community college preparation is concerned. Three items directly related to instructional competence were rated on a par with the demand for depth of knowledge in the instructional field: (a) the command of a range of instructional techniques and familiarity with various media; (b) the ability to communicate effectively with students and colleagues; (c) the skill to cope with the learning problems of students with widely varying educational capacities and interests. Still others added support by appealing for an understanding of the learning and teaching processes and the ability to motivate students. The special demands for teaching effectiveness were summarized by an engineering technology instructor as follows:

> Because of the open-door policy of the community college, several unique situations confront the community college teacher. The student population covers a very wide spectrum in regard to academic background and age. Because of the wide variety of programs offered, the school also serves the needs of a broad socio-economic group, where a large number of the students are employed either part or full time. Certain of these programs are also suitable for the physically handicapped and the rehabilitation students. Any classroom situation, therefore, may have students with a wide range of capabilities, and it is because of this that the community college teacher's task differs from that of other higher education instructors. He must be flexible enough in his presentation to be able to get across a given point to a student with an eighth grade background and to another with prior college experience. He must be able to recognize in his students and allow for: age, physical limitations, job commitments, and, just as important, his other students' reactions to these siutations. This mixed grouping presents the possibility of personality clashes which are very challenging, especially in the vocational-technical areas, where the same students are together for the same day throughout the program. The community college teacher must, therefore, want to teach and be willing to confront these many varying challenges.

Still another clear directive centered upon the ability to understand students and their manifold problems. Nothing appeared to be more innocent or less new when the point was first raised, but incipient yawns gave way to indignant inquiries when it was pointed out how rarely psychology or guidance courses focus specifically upon the problems of community college personnel. And this despite the fact that the guidance function of community college has been stressed as long as the patriarchs in the movement can recall!

The affective domain of attitudes, interests, and appreciations was not neglected. Participants pointed out that the community college instructor should be a well-balanced, mature, flexible individual who genuinely likes his fellow man and expresses his sentiments by respecting other peoples' ideas and carrying his share of the work load. The ancient ideal of the good man being selected before preparation is offered has not lost its lustre.

A Challenging Set of Guidelines

From the standpoint of the college, the summer's efforts were highly informative. The combination of a good leadership and well-selected participants produced considered guidelines for dealing with difficult basic questions. The association of the community college colleagues with the Eastern staff over the period of a quarter led to new respect and understanding which has modified some superiority and inferiority complexes and should facilitate solutions to some common understandings like course equivalences and credit transfer.

Unsolicited comments from Eastern's participants, as well as the community college instructors, indicate that considerable insight was gained in both the common and differential roles of the two institutions.

With a challenging set of guidelines, community college staff members in the field who understand Eastern's intensions, an enthusiastic faculty, and the services of a recently established and independently functioning community college department, Eastern expects to blaze some new trails in preparing community college staff members.

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